

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device to perform a medical procedure comprising:

a medical device; and

an indicator produced directly on the medical device, the indicator capable of undergoing a color change when exposed to a particular environment.
2. The device of claim 1, wherein the medical device comprises a handle, a distal end effector, and an elongate portion connecting the handle to the distal end effector.
3. The device of claim 2, wherein the indicator is produced directly on the handle.
4. The device of claim 2, wherein the handle comprises a ring portion and an elongate portion.
5. The device of claim 4, wherein the indicator is produced directly on the ring portion.
6. The device of claim 1, wherein the indicator is printed directly on the medical device.

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7. The device of claim 1, wherein the indicator is configured to show a symbol when it undergoes the color change.

8. The device of claim 1, wherein the particular environment includes a chemical.

9. The device of claim 8, wherein the chemical is one of EtO gas and formaldehyde gas.

10. The device of claim 1, wherein the particular environment includes one of radiation, steam, dry heat, and plasma sterilization.

11. The device of claim 1, wherein the indicator is configured to be substantially the same color as a portion of the medical device before being exposed to the particular environment.

12. The device of claim 1, wherein the indicator is configured to be a different color than a portion of the medical device after being exposed to the particular environment.

13. The device of claim 1, wherein the indicator is produced directly on a surface of the medical device.

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14. The device of claim 1, wherein the indicator includes a plurality of indicators.

15. The device of claim 14, wherein each of the plurality of indicators undergoes a color change different from the other of the plurality of indicators.

16. A medical device comprising:
a handle;
a distal end effector;
an elongate portion connecting the handle to the distal end effector; and
a visual indicator produced directly on a surface of the handle,
wherein the indicator is configured to be substantially the same color as the surface of the handle before being exposed to a particular environment, and
wherein indicator is configured to be a different color than the surface of the handle after being exposed to the particular environment.

17. The medical device of claim 16, wherein the indicator is printed directly on the medical device.

18. The medical device of claim 16, wherein the indicator is configured to show a symbol when it undergoes the color change.

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19. The medical device of claim 16, wherein the particular environment includes a chemical.

20. The medical device of claim 19, wherein the chemical is one of EtO gas and formaldehyde gas.

21. The medical device of claim 16, wherein the particular environment includes one of radiation, steam, dry heat, and plasma sterilization.

22. The medical device of claim 16, wherein the indicator includes a plurality of indicators.

23. The medical device of claim 22, wherein each of the plurality of indicators undergoes a color change different from the other of the plurality of indicators.

24. A method of determining a state of a medical device, the method comprising:

providing a medical device having an indicator produced directly on a portion of the medical device, the indicator capable of undergoing a color change when exposed to a particular environment; and

viewing the medical device to determine if the indicator has changed color due to exposure to the particular environment.

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25. The method of claim 24, wherein providing a medical device includes providing a medical device with an indicator printed directly on a portion of the device.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein viewing the medical device includes determining if there is a symbol on the device.

27. The method of claim 24, wherein the particular environment includes a chemical.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the chemical is one of EtO gas and formaldehyde gas.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein the particular environment includes one of radiation, steam, dry heat, and plasma sterilization.

30. The method of claim 24, wherein viewing the medical device includes determining if the indicator is substantially a same color as the portion of the medical device.

31. The method of claim 24, wherein viewing the medical device includes determining if the indicator is a different color than the portion of the medical device.

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32. The method of claim 24, wherein the medical device includes a plurality of indicators and viewing the medical device includes determining if any one of the plurality of indicators has changed color.

33. The method of claim 24, wherein the medical device comprises a handle, a distal end effector, and an elongate portion connecting the handle to the distal end effector, and

wherein the indicator is produced directly on the handle.

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